

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action dated May 18, 2007 has been carefully considered. Claims 1, 5-8, 10-12, 14 and 19-21 are pending in the application, with claim 1 being the only independent claim. Claims 1, 5-8, 10-12, 14 and 19-21 have been amended. Claims 2-4, 9, 13, 15-18 and 22-39 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration of the application, as amended herein and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because of an informality therein.

Claim 7 has been amended to address this informality. In view of this amendment, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, of claim 7 is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 3 Over Prior Art

Dependent claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 00/50693 (*Jokinen*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,192,597 (*Kahl*).

Independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of now canceled claim 3. Amended claim 1 now recites, *inter alia*, the following:

“a bellows configured for moving the sealing element relative to the fabric,

wherein the sealing element is arranged on a support so that a location of the sealing element with respect to the fabric can be adjusted nearer to or further away from the fabric when the bellows expands or contracts”(emphasis added).

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 1 is patentable over *Jokinen* in view of *Kahl* because the combination of *Jokinen* and *Kahl* fails to teach or suggest the above-quoted limitations of amended claim 1. In particular, the combination of *Jokinen* and *Kahl* fails to

disclose, teach or suggest using a bellows to adjust a location of a sealing element relative to a fabric.

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that *Jokinen* does not disclose using pressure in a bellows to adjust a location of a sealing element relative to a fabric. Therefore, *Jokinen* fails to disclose, teach or suggest using a bellows to adjust a location of a sealing element relative to a fabric, as now expressly recited in amended claim 1.

To “bridge” this gap between claim 3 (now amended claim 1) and *Jokinen*, the Examiner refers to *Kahl* and contends that

“Kahl discloses a sealing element for creating low pressure regions against a moving wire in a paper machine dryer section. The sealing element is similar in construction as that of *Jokinen* and used in a similar manner. Kahl discloses a pressure loading element is a known alternative to a spring loading element, see *Kahl* (column 2, lines 31-38). One skilled in the art would recognize utilizing the claimed pressure medium as a known alternative to a spring in the sealing elements of *Jokinen*.¹”

Applicants respectfully submit that the pressure loading element of *Kahl* does not qualify as a bellows which is used to adjust a location of a sealing element relative to a fabric, as now expressly recited in amended claim 1.

Kahl relates to a sealing device which is positioned on a side of a fibrous pulp web located opposite the support face of a dryer cylinder to strip away at least the majority of the bordering air layer that is entrained or swept in by the fibrous pulp web and/or its support belt (see col. 1, lines 21-25 of *Kahl*). The sealing device 20 includes a sealing disc 22 which “can be pressed against support belt 14” (see Figs. 1 and 2, and col. 6, lines 52-57 of *Kahl*). More specifically, *Kahl* discloses that the sealing disc 22 can be pressed mechanically, pneumatically and/or hydraulically against the support belt 14, and that in the event of a pneumatic and/or hydraulic pressing, the sealing disc 22 may be imparted upon by at least one cylinder/piston unit (see col. 2, lines 30-37 of *Kahl*). Thus, at most *Kahl* teaches using a pressure loading element

such as a cylinder/piston unit to press the sealing disc 22 against the support belt 14. However, *Kahl* does not teach or suggest using a pressure loading element to adjust a location the sealing disc 22 relative to the support belt 14. *Kahl* certainly does not teach or suggest using a bellows to adjust a location the sealing disc 22 relative to the support belt 14. Therefore, the combination of *Jokinen* and *Kahl* fails to disclose, teach or suggest using a bellows to adjust a location of a sealing element relative to a fabric, as now expressly recited in amended claim 1 of the present application.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claim 3 (now amended claim 1) is respectfully requested.

Allowability of Claims 5-8, 10-12, 14 and 19-21

Dependent claims 5-8, 10-12, 14 and 19-21 are allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 1 is allowable, as well as for the additional limitations recited therein.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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